Job Resignation of Hospital Staff Nurses

LTC Patricia A. Patridian, AN
Chief, Nursing Research
Walter Reed Army Medical Center

University of
Pennsylvania
NURSING
EDUCATION
BUILDING

Dissertation Committee

- Linda Aiken, RN, PhD, Chairperson
- Paul Allison, PhD, Statistician
- Julie Sochalski, RN, PhD
- Eileen Lake, RN, PhD
- Douglas Sloane, PhD, Statistician

Background

- Status of the nursing shortage
- Retention of experienced nurses is critical
- Magnet hospital studies – good working environments for staff nurses
- Is the quality of the work environment related to voluntary job resignation?

Study Aim

- Examine the effects of personal characteristics, daily work demands, daily work satisfaction, and the work environment on voluntary resignation of staff nurses.

Personal Characteristics

- Age
- Experience
  - In nursing
  - In hospital
  - On unit
- Education

Daily Work Demands

- Daily staffing and workload conditions
  - RN-to-patient ratio
  - RN skill mix
  - Total staff
  - Patient census
  - Hours worked
  - Nurse-assessed workload
  - Nurse-assessed understaffing

Work Environment Attributes

- Nurse-Physician Collaboration
- Resource Adequacy
- Administrative Support
- Composite Professional Practice Index

Design

- Descriptive, correlational design
- Secondary data analysis
  - Data from multi-site, multipurpose study on outcomes of hospitalized AIDS patients
  - Aiken, L. H., & Sloane, D. M. (1997).
  - Aiken, L. H., Sloane, D. M., Lake, E. T., Sochalski, J., & Weber, A. L. (1999).
- Cross-sectional and longitudinal data sources

Sample

- RNs and LPNs
- In 40 units
- Of 20 hospitals
- National sample

Data Source: Cross-sectional Survey

- Demographics
  - Age (years)
  - Experience (years): nursing, hospital, and unit
  - Education (years)
- Revised Nursing Work Index (1-4 Likert scale)
  - Nurse-physician collaboration (3 items)
  - Resource adequacy (4 items)
  - Administrative support (5 items)
  - Composite index (33 items including all above)

Data Sources: Longitudinal

- Coupons (mini-surveys)
  - Daily work demands
    - Workload perceptions (light to heavy)
    - Staffing perceptions (understaffed or not)
    - Hours worked
    - Shift assignment (day, evening, night)
    - Nurse work satisfaction (Faces scale, 1 – 4)
- Charge Nurse Reports
  - Patient census
  - Staffing types and numbers
  - Calculated RN to patient ratios and RN skill mix

Data Source: Nurse Manager Reports

- Actual job termination date
- Reasons for job termination
  - Voluntary
  - Involuntary (excluded from analysis)
- Data collected for 22 months

Analysis

- Aggregated longitudinal variables to the level of the individual nurse (i.e., daily satisfaction)
- Survival analysis (Cox proportional hazards regression)

Original Sample: N = 920 Nurses

↓

85 nurses did not complete coupons (835 remaining)

↓

58 did not complete satisfaction measure (777 remaining)

↓

65 did not complete cross-sectional survey (712 remaining)

↓

15 did not vary in their daily satisfaction measures (important for another part of the study)

↓

Demographics

Variable	Mean (years)	SD
Age	32.3	9.41
Education	16	2.1
Nursing experience	9.3	8.5
Hospital experience	5	5.8
Unit tenure	3.6	4

Findings

- 79 (11%) of the nurses voluntarily resigned within the study period
- A small percentage were involuntarily terminated
- In bivariate analyses none of the work demand variables were related to resignation.

Findings

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Education	1.071		
Nursing Experience	.997		
Unit tenure	.876*	.860**	.878*
Resource Adequacy		.682**	
Composite Index			.655*
Model Chi Square (df)	13.17** (2)	14.99*** (2)	9.84** (2)

*p ≤ .05, **p ≤ .01, ***p ≤ .001

Interpretation of Hazards Ratios

- Unit tenure was significantly related to job resignation
- HR of .86: Each additional year on the unit was associated with a 14% drop in the hazard of resignation
- (HR – 1) 100 = - 14

Interpretation of Hazards Ratios

- Resource Adequacy was significantly related to job resignation, controlling for unit tenure
- HR of .68 = each unit increase in the score on this subscale is associated with a 32% reduction in the hazard of job resignation
- (HR – 1) 100 = - 32

Interpretation of Hazards Ratios

- The Professional Practice Composite Index was significantly related to job resignation, controlling for unit tenure
- HR of .66 = each unit increase in the score on this subscale is associated with a 34% reduction in the hazard of job resignation
- (HR – 1) 100 = - 34

Conclusions

- Nurses who have been working on a unit longer are less likely to resign from their jobs
- Nurses who perceive better resource availability and a more favorable professional practice environment were less likely to resign from their jobs

Implications

- Previous research revealed an indirect association between satisfaction and resignation through intention to resign

  (Lake, 1994)
- Professional practice environments are associated with a reduction in voluntary job resignation
- First study to empirically document that professional practice environments are associated with less voluntary job termination among RN staff nurses.